WORD PICTURES OF THE PRESIDENT'S AIMS AND WAYS

How Mr. Harding's Newspaper Training Helps Him in the Overwhelming Task of Running the Nation and How He Keeps in Touch With Pulse of Sentiment Throughout the Country---Place Giving Strain Soon to End and Much Needed Play Period Will Succeed It

ROUNDING out the pen pictures of President Harding at work in the White House, THE NEW YORK HERALD to-day offers to its readers an even more personal portrait of the Chief Executive. Last Sunday he was shown as under a microscope at work and at play. To-day Mr. Hill offers a new angle of study, one showing what is back of the President's daily doings, why he is so beloved by those about him and how he reacts under the trying conditions of his great office. Not the least interesting feature of this closeup view of the President is his love of the outdoors, for golf and fishing especially, and his pleasure in his dog, Caswell Laddie Boy, the White House pet.

By EDWIN C. HILL.

New York Herald Bureau,
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PARTLY because he is a newspaper man and partly because he is a man of sense, the President knows that it pays to advertise. Even if his Marion *Star* did not bring him in a net profit of $35,000 a year, he would be sufficiently in tune with the times to know that publicity is a grand thing for an individual and not a bad thing for a cause.

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MR. HARDING must necessarily be a large advertiser. He has big ideas to sell. He has a personality to popularize. For an example he has the career of one of the most skilful publicity experts that ever lived, Theodore Roosevelt, but it is doubtful if Harding needs to resort to a pattern. He has his own notions. Time has shown that they are very clever notions. They are clever because they are simple and human and appealing. The ideas he seeks to put over are not lost in a thicket of words. They are not dressed up in a morning coat and silk hat. They are good, plain, average stuff, readily comprehended and absorbed by the plain folk of the land.

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MR. HARDING has spent about a year advertising his personality. It cost him and his friends more than $100,000 before the leaders of the Republican party did the necessary thinking which inspired the delegates to put Harding over with a great hurrah, and thereafter the Republican National Committee spent several millions in the same laudable cause—to present Harding as such a fine and likable figure that every man and woman of reasoning age would want to vote for him. It was a job well done—about 67 per cent. perfect in selling results, and that is a whale of an average in advertising accomplishment.

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THE impression was very successfully spread about that Harding's great characteristics were, in addition to a fine order of intelligence, common sense, conciliatory skill and warmheartedness. He does possess these characteristics most markedly, and there was nothing deceptive in the advertising. The impression was put about that Harding's special qualities were the qualities most needed by the country, after a dose of super-sentimentalism which had disordered the whole internal works. The idea was diffused that Harding stood out as an old-fashioned American of the McKinley sort, a good deal more up to date than McKinley would have been; a very much modernized McKinley. Of course, Harding doesn't resemble McKinley in the least. The two men would have had little of consequence in common. Harding is a great deal more like Grover Cleveland—like a very polished and urbane Grover Cleveland. At times he suggests Roosevelt. Nobody who really knows him ever thinks of McKinley. But the comparison was a useful campaign idea and has some value even now because of the esteem in which McKinley was held.

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IT was a very successful advertising campaign, but it did not end on the night of the second of November, 1920. The new Ambassador to Italy, Richard Washburn Child, one of the principal and most skilful of the Harding advertisers, realized this acutely. He remarked on one occasion that, with the kind of attractive personality possessed by the President, he could get almost anything done by keeping himself vividly before the people. The idea was that the President need never be afraid of insurrections in the Senate or the House, such things as occurred in the unhappy Administration of Mr. Taft. If he took pains to keep the people thoroughly informed as to what he wanted and why. Evidently the President is proceeding along the road pointed out by this suggestion.

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WITH the newspaper correspondents he is always as frank as the difficulties and delicacies of his situation permit. Often he sets forth the "inside facts" of a pending problem, just as the upstanding Mr. Hughes does over in the State Department. This talk is all sacredly confidential, of course, and no correspondent would dream of revealing anything the President said or suggested. Few Presidents have ever done this, have ever met the go-betweens of the people and their governmental servants with quite so much comradeship and so much appreciation of what is actually due to the press. There have been Presidents who seemed to assume that newspaper correspondents were trying to gratify personal curiosity instead of conscientiously striving to serve the people, just as Presidents have to do, and who sometimes got very "up stage" and standoffish. But there is no trace of this in Harding. He remains as simple and approachable and as willing to cooperate with newspaper workers as ever he was.

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THE occasions of his conferences with the correspondents, twice a week, Tuesday mornings and Friday afternoons, are quite interesting. There are actually about 300 news writers entitled to attend these conferences, which are held in the President's office of the Executive wing of the White House, but of course there are never that many present. Much vigilance is used to keep impostors out of these conferences. Sometimes there are more than 100, which makes the affair rather too bulky for much practical use. The public official never lived who was able to talk with his best frankness before a crowd of newspaper men. Masses of this sort have rather a chilling effect. Candor is paralyzed by the nervous reaction of the one man who confronts the many. But Harding responds with as much freedom as any reasonable person could expect. Anybody is perfectly free to ask whatever questions do not obviously transcend good taste and the proprieties and that do not obviously embarrass the President. It is give and take in such matters. If the question touches on a matter of a delicate sort, a problem whose solution has not yet been found, the President is very apt to say dryly: "Forget that you have asked that question."

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EVEN on days when the President deems it unwise to make very definite statements and to originate news the correspondents do not go away empty minded. Every one of these meetings has its value, for the reason that every one of them exposes some interesting side of the President's personality, which sooner or later is bound to be of interpretative use to the thoughtful writer. All of them indicate very clearly the main, broad purposes that the President is seeking to build into laws and understanding. They reveal most of all that he labors incessantly on the principal purpose of all, "bringing men together." He is constantly dropping a phrase here and a word there which go to show that he dreams of harmonizing the many conflicting interests in this country and to lead classes and sections into a better understanding of each other. Every project he tackles is approached from this standpoint. It is as natural to him as his liking for human beings and love for dumb brutes.

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NOT very much goes on in this country and the world generally that Harding misses. He is up to the minute not only on the news but on trend of opinion as manifested in editorial expression. Simple machinery has been devised to keep him accurately informed. The Yellow Sheet (it might have been better named, one thinks) is an institution of the White House. Two assistant secretaries do little else than read the newspapers and clip, assort and label their contents. The clippings, news and editorial, are pasted upon sheets of stiff yellow paper, about 14 inches long and 10 wide. News articles and items are gathered under certain general heads, such as Congress, industry, shipping and so on. The day's accumulation is neatly arranged and placed upon the President's desk in his study in the White House living rooms. Another pile of Yellow Sheets is made up of editorial comments.

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THE President does not try to read all of the news clippings. That would consume several hours of his crowded day. In the course of the day he finds time to go through the pile of Yellow Sheets, seeking topics of special importance or peculiar interest. He uses headlines as his guide in this swift selection. When he comes upon what he wants he reads the article or item thoroughly. The editorials he takes to bed with him. That is to say, he saves the pile of Yellow Sheets upon which is pasted editorial opinion from the more important newspapers until he is about ready to retire. Either before he gets into bed or for half an hour while he lies in bed he studies this comment. It is his final work of the day, this effort to keep in close touch with popular opinion as manifested in newspaper editorials.

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HE believes that editorials do reveal the trend of public opinion. He knows of no more accurate means of gauging popular thought. He actually takes immense pains to keep his mind fresh about such things. When he was campaigning for the Presidency he found it useful and even valuable to pay close attention to editorial reaction from his speeches. Without in the least stultifying himself or abandoning convictions, he was able at times to soften or ameliorate certain tendencies of his that did not seem to be making progress with the people, and to accelerate or emphasize certain other suggestions he had put forth in public addresses. He found it profitable and according to the dictates of common sense in those days of aspiration, and he is following the same course now that he is experiencing the joys and cares of realization.

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IN the mass of news and editorial review that comes to his attention daily the President observes a disposition here and there to regard him as a sort of conjurer, a magician who will miraculously resolve all the aching problems and bring about a kind of millennium. This makes him unhappy, for he does not look upon himself as a superman, and he does not believe in his common sense that any one person, however highly placed and empowered, can in any brief period do all that is necessary to be done in the way of reconstruction and restoration. Whenever he notes a disposition to look upon him as the leader of a people willing to work and cooperate toward these great ends he is very happy. That is his own conception of the situation—that it is a people's job, a task in which all hands must join in good natural zeal, taking speed and rhythm of effort from the man at the top, but not looking to him to do all the work or even all the planning. Making use of publicity as he does, with intelligence and restraint, he never loses an opportunity to point out this central fact. He never misses a chance to preach teamwork.

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THE President will soon be out of a period that has overworked him and actually distressed him—the job hunting, job awarding period. Nobody who hasn't actually suffered can comprehend what it means to have the disposal of a few thousand places in Government service. Reams have been written about the ambitions, intrigues, impudences and exactions of persons scheming for places upon the Government payroll, but the story has never been told and probably never can be told in its astonishing and sordid reality. Hours that should be devoted to planning for the people must be devoted to patronage. It is a delicate and dangerous task. On the one hand the President by inclination and by pledge will have none but the best men in office, the best obtainable, that is. On the other hand he is in duty bound to consider the welfare of his party organization. He remains the leader of his party, even though he is President of the whole people. Clumsiness and tactlessness in awarding patronage have caused miserable consequences in the past. It is so hard to please and it is so easy to offend—and without the least suspicion often enough that offence has been given. The friendships of years may be shattered in half a minute. Even in the giving, offence may be caused, because there are few men seeking Government office who do not regard themselves as superior to the post that falls to them.

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THIS trying period, which has occupied so much of the President's energy in his waking hours, and which, indeed, has troubled his very dreams, is approaching its end. The diplomatic posts have been awarded or will have been given out soon, and the major positions in domestic office have been distributed to the faithful. The postal service presents trying problems, but the civil service comes to the rescue there to a large extent, and the Postmaster-General must take upon his own capable shoulders a good deal of this patronage worry. The President will soon be able to give more time to the big problems that the people are so interested in, the restoration of the railroads, the adjustment of internal taxation, a new tariff, upbuilding of agriculture, reduction of the cost of living, general employment at good wages, a sensible foreign policy, with some real accomplishments as regards creating stable relations with Mexico. These are some of the main things. He has ideas on all these problems that he wants to popularize. He will be able to receive callers with ideas in their heads about these matters, instead of giving his time daily to twenty or thirty persons who come to argue that Hon. So-and-So should be or should not be named for this or that post. He will be able to clear his mind of the cobwebs of partisanship expediency. He will be getting down to the big work that he was elected for.

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ALSO—and this is very important in the case of this particular person—he will have more time for play. He needs lots of play. Nobody can face the work he faces without taking plenty of time for recreation. Without frequent goes at golf or other physical exercise Harding would not last long, probably. His physical system cries aloud for exertion. Strolling in the beautiful grounds south of the White House wouldn't do for this big, active man. He need's more running around, more sweating, than a sedate jaunt with Caswell Laddie Boy could give him. He needs two or three hard games of golf every week, along with other exercise daily.

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CASWELL LADDIE BOY, very well known to an admiring public as the President's Airedale, is a privileged personage around the White House—and this dog is really a personage in his way. If the President has a secretary, so has Laddie. If the President rejoices in a military aid, so does Laddie. If the President is favored, wherever he goes, with a personal attendant, he has nothing on the Airedale. Laddie's secretary, military aid and personal attendant is Wilson Jackson, originally from one of the Southern States, I believe, but now for some years a resident of the capital. Jackson is quite colored and is more notable for amiability than for size. A four foot rule would be quite sufficient to measure him with and he could be crowded into a waste basket. Until March 4, 1921, he was attached in several useful capacities to the Administration of Woodrow Wilson. He served his country as a scullion in the White House kitchen. He travelled for the League of Nations. When Mr. Wilson went to the coast in the interest of the Covenant, he saw fit to invite Jackson to accompany him. Jackson was a figure on the President's train and was almost entirely responsible for seeing that the President got his poached eggs and toast just right. When the country swept the Wilson Administration out and the Harding Administration in Jackson was recognized to be too valuable to lose. The new President kept him on. When Laddie arrived it was entirely natural that Jackson should become Laddie's chaperon and attendant. The two are inseparable. Laddie is much more Jackson's dog than he is the President's.

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LADDIE is a great consolation to the President. He helps a tired and anxious man forget some of the paltry squabbles of patronage, squabbles that seem very small and mean when put alongside the big concerns of the Government. Leaders quarrelling over scraps of office and pouring their resentments and suspicions out upon the President. Feuds that cannot be ignored because they threaten party success in the future. Hostile men to be brought together. The President seeking patiently to pacify clamorous factions. This is what has been going on and is about to end, let us hope. It is something that has taken a good deal out of the President. Any one who knows him well perceives what the strain has been, the strain of this unnecessary but inescapable burden. His Cabinet Ministers have helped him a good deal, for they are all strong, competent men and good politicians, used to wrestling with troublesome problems of patronage; but nobody can assume the burdens of a President. He must stand alone. Everybody runs to him with his troubles—railroads, farmers, labor, capital. He needs consolations.

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HE plays a pretty good game of golf for a President. Really, he has nothing to be ashamed of by any reasonable standard and comparison. The national amateur golf champion of the United States, young Charles Evans, widely known as "Chick," praises Harding's game quite warmly. He doesn't believe the White House will ever know a better golfer than its present occupant. Evans finds that the President has an excellent stance, though a bit stiff; that his swing is pretty good, though he quits his stroke a mite too soon and doesn't get out of it all the power he should; that he putts very well indeed, with accuracy and good judgment, though he will "push" a trifle now and then; that he uses the mashie better than any other club and that his grip is excellent. What Evans especially liked about the President's golf was the President's eagerness to take advice and to learn from those who know more (about golf) than he. Chick found nothing uppish about our Chief Magistrate.

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THE President has been considering the notion of laying out a practice hole on the White House grounds. There is plenty of room for a difficult test of one hole, or even of several holes. The grounds sweep south of the White House for a long way, and they are very broad. Large, old trees, terraces, walks and a fountain provide hazards, and the beautiful smooth lawn offers plenty of places for greens.

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HERE'S a free tip for any worthy fellow citizen able to use it: Warren G. Harding is a born fisherman. He's badly infected with that mysterious something or other that makes a considerable proportion of mankind crave the solace of the still waters and the swift, and who believe that a leaping brook trout or a plunging small mouth bass is the most beautiful thing in Nature. He has it, has it bad, our President. One day in an inlet of the Gulf of Mexico I saw this urbane gentleman, clad in sun helmet, old sweater and baggy, dirty, duck trousers, fight a 200 pound tarpon for two hours. He would have made an interesting study for Prof. Osborn or some other student of the development of mankind. There wasn't much difference, except garb and equipment, between the twentieth century statesman and the Cro-Magnon gentleman of 20,000 years ago, who also sought big fish. He wore his fighting face that day, and was the hunter entirely, very close to earth, primitive. The tip is that he might well appreciate an opportunity some of these days when work slackens a bit to hook the big fish.

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I HAVE suggested variously that the President believes in advertising, believes in letting the people know just what kind of person he is and what he has in his head. It must not be deduced from all this that he seeks to puff himself and his qualities, that he blows his own horn, that he is afflicted with the special vanity that has caused press agenting to become one of the considerable industries of the nation. Not at all. Harding is actually a very modest man. He is actually averse to personal mention, if no other end is to be served than a mere compliment to him. He does not care for the limelight. He has a distaste for fuss and feathers and ceremony. The advertising he has done and purposes to do is for the welfare of the country as he sees it. First, it is necessary to inform the country about just the kind of person he is. Second, it is necessary to acquaint the country with the main purposes of his Administration. By these means he creates confidence and a disposition on the people's part to be patient. One of the great ends of the advertising Harding does is to stimulate a better feeling throughout the country—to induce a kindlier attitude among citizens generally.

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HE believes strongly that public officials should take the time and trouble to study the locale of great problems. If he had not been nominated for the Presidency and had continued in the Senate, he would have gone to the Philippines to make a personal study of insular affairs and of the capacity for self-government of the little brown brothers. After he was elected he went to Panama, because he realized that the Panama Canal (our main contact with Latin-America) was sure to figure largely in his Administration. He wanted to see for himself how the wheels went around; to study for himself the attitude of American governing officials toward a native race. He means to go to Alaska this summer if he can possibly afford the time. Secretary Fall has told him that something will have to be done about Alaska pretty soon. Paucity of transportation facilities is seriously injuring our far northern territory. Population is decreasing. Either the Government must give a freer hand to private concerns, in the way of coal and other minerals and in railroad building, or it must find the money itself. The President is keenly concerned about this Alaskan problem and believes it to be his duty to go to the country and study the situation in person.

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IF our Latin American relations should ever positively suggest a visit to South America by the President of the United States Harding would not hesitate, doubtless. Although he can be put down as a rather conservative person, he never hesitates to smash a precedent if he believes good can be accomplished. This is one of the curiosities of contrast in his interesting personality.